

August 12, 2021

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Regular Meeting
held August 12, 2021
in the Probate Courtroom
Machias, Maine**

**Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner Vinton Cassidy
Commissioner John Crowley, Sr.
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administrative Assistant
Patrick Davis, Addison
Jill C. Holmes, Treasurer
Susan Sullivan, D.A.'s Office Machias
Rachel Worcester, D.A.'s Office Machias
Paula Johnson-Rolfe, WCSO
Rich Rolfe, WCSO
Josh Rolfe, WCSO
Tammy Gay, Registry of Deeds
Lisa M. Hanscom, EMA
Lyman Holmes, Probate Court**

Commissioner Christopher Gardner was not present.

Executive Department business was called to order at 4:03 p.m.

Approval of the minutes for the Regular Commissioners' meeting held on July 15, 2021. (Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0-)

AGENDA ITEM: Monthly and Quarterly Reports

The Commissioners were provided written reports from Emergency Management Agency and the Treasurer's Office. The reports were accepted under the gavel. (See attached)

AGENDA ITEM: Payroll Change Notices

By consensus and without prejudice, the Commissioners accepted the final resignation of Karl Pingree as full-time Buildings and Grounds Maintenance effective 08/03/21. Karl's original resignation date was extended one month.

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By consensus, the Commissioners accepted the resignation of Kyle Davis as full-time Corrections Officer effective 07/31/21. Kyle will remain as a part-time Corrections Officer.

By consensus and without prejudice, the Commissioners accepted the resignation of Justin Lawson as full-time Corrections Officer effective 08/12/21.

District Attorney Matthew Foster recommended Rachel Worcester to be hired for the position of full-time Secretary for the District Attorney's Office, Machias Branch.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to approve the hire of Rachel Worcester as full-time Secretary effective 08/23/21 as presented. (Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0)**

RCC Director Josh Rolfe recommended the hire of Toni Bridges as p/t ECS. Toni has been cross-trained and fully certified as an Emergency Communications Specialist.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to approve the hire of Toni Bridges as part-time ECS effective 08/01/21. (Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0)**

With the recommendation of the Probate Register,

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to discharge Jessy Melowicz as part-time Probate Clerk effective 08/10/21. (Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Award Bid for Bulk Salt

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald presented the bid results for bulk salt for the 2021/22 season. Requests for bids were sent to five vendors. Five bid packets were received. The bids were as follows: Eastern Salt Company, Inc. of Lowell, MA: NO BID; New England Salt Co. of Bangor, ME: \$74.25 per ton for all locations; Morton Salt of Chicago, IL: \$88.89 per ton for all locations; Harcros Chemicals of Westbrook, ME: \$70.88 per ton for all locations; and Cargill, Inc. of North Olmsted, OH: NO BID. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald recommended the bid be awarded to Harcros Chemicals with a bid of \$70.88 per ton for all locations.

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MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to award the salt bid to Harcros Chemicals as presented per recommendation of the County Manager. (Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0)

AGENDA ITEM: Award Heating Bid

RFP's were sent out to oil and propane distributors for the winter season 2021/22. Only one bid was received for both the oil and propane. Dead River's bid for oil was for a fixed price of \$2.4261, and a fixed price of \$1.7305 for propane. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald stated both bids are an increase from last year. Betsy noted this will figure to be an approximate cost of \$10,000.00 more for heating oil and propane than last year. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald recommended the Commissioners accept both bids from Dead River.

MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to award the bid for oil to Dead River for a fixed price of \$2.4261. (Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0)

MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to award the bid for propane to Dead River for a fixed price of \$1.7305. (Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0)

AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on Cell Phone Service Letter

During the July meeting, the Board of Commissioners signed letters to cell phone service companies to address the growing concerns from individuals and municipalities in Washington County regarding the dependability of cell phone service. At the request of Commissioner Gardner, one more company was needing to be notified. A letter to T-Mobile was signed as presented.

AGENDA ITEM: Carry Over

Treasurer Jill Holmes presented the Carry Over List for 2020 to the Commissioners. Jill stated the total requesting to be carried over is \$1,445,015.85. (See attached)

MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to approve the carry over for 2020 as presented. (Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0)

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AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on Tax Abatement Decision for Costa vs Town of Perry

After proper notice and hearing on the petition for tax abatement Costa vs Town of Perry before the Washington County Commissioners held on July 15, 2021, it has been determined that all legal requirements for the appeal were met and the petition was denied. The letter of denial was signed by the Board of Commissioners.

**AGENDA ITEM: Schedule Tax Abatement Hearings for:
Bibber vs Town of Charlotte and
Jones vs Town of Charlotte**

Application for a tax abatement hearing was received by both David Bibber and William and Brenda Jones of Town of Charlotte. Both tax abatement hearing requests were received before the deadline for the Town of Charlotte to send notification of their decision. Therefore, both tax abatement hearing requests will be on the September Commissioners' meeting agenda to be scheduled for October.

AGENDA ITEM: County Policy Benefit

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald presented a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners that insurance coverage for domestic partners of full-time employees be offered as a benefit. Betsy explained there are several steps in the process to add this benefit offering to employees. The first step in the process is the Board of Commissioners must vote to authorize allowing domestic partner coverage for the Health Trust benefits.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to approve the addition of domestic partners to the benefit package offered by the County. (Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Building Committee Update

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald reported that a meeting was held for those interested in giving input regarding the use of the American Rescue Plan funds for new facilities for Washington County. There were nine attendees at the meeting. Betsy stated different ideas regarding new facilities were discussed. Uses of ARP funds still need

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to be clarified and the Department of Treasury will be consulted.

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AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on Solar Credit Agreement

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald stated she has spent a considerable amount of time with the Treasurer reviewing solar credit agreements. Betsy presented an offer from Standard Solar, Inc. to enter into a Net Energy Billing Commercial Tariff Credit Agreement with Washington County. Betsy explained buying into the agreement guarantees a 15% discount on the County's electric bill which figures to be approximately \$12,500 in savings per year. Betsy noted there is no minimum amount of energy needed to be used to receive the discount. Commissioner Crowley asked if there was any obligation by the County if the agreement is accepted. Betsy stated there is no obligation. Betsy also noted one can withdraw from the agreement in a twelve-month period if a benefit is not realized. By consensus, the Commissioners decided to review the contract more thoroughly before making a decision.

AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on Remote Participation Policy

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald presented a Remote Participation Policy for the Commissioners' consideration. Betsy explained the purpose of the policy is to allow members of the public body to participate in a public meeting using remote methods under certain circumstances. Remote participation will be used only in the cases of the existence of an emergency or urgent issue that requires the public body to meet using remote methods of attendance.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to approve the Remote Participation Policy and the policy was signed as presented. (Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on Earned Paid Leave

Washington County revised the personnel policy in November 2020 to include earned paid leave for part-time employees. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald presented the Commissioners with a formal Earned Paid Leave Policy for signatures as recommended by the County's legal counsel. (See attached)

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MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to sign the Earned Paid Leave policy as presented. (Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0)

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AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on M.O.U. with Judicial Branch

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald presented a Memorandum of Understanding Addendum. The original M.O.U. between the County of Washington and the Judicial Branch of the State of Maine specified cost sharing for maintenance of the Court building. Betsy stated the MOU Addendum has one change to the original M.O.U. The addendum has included a clause that states before any major equipment capital purchase or service contract totaling greater than \$1000.00 for any shared expense category can be executed, it must be reviewed and approved by the MJB in writing.

MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to sign the amended Memorandum of Understanding with the MJB as presented.
(Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0)

MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to go into Executive Session. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed 2-0. It was 4:30 p.m.
(Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0)

MOTION The Commissioners declared themselves to have closed the Executive Session. It was 4:55 p.m.
(Crowley / Cassidy, 2-0)

No decision.

ADJOURNMENT

4:56 p.m.

ATTEST:

Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.

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